

"Hail, Full of Grace"

REV. H. J. JONES, O.P.

Sermon preached in St. Saviour's Church, Lower Dominick Street, Dublin, and reprinted from the "Irish Catholic"

TODAY millions have repeated this Angelic salutation, "Hail, Mary, full of grace." Those words have gone up to our Mother in Heaven from the hearts of her children here on earth. They have ascended from beneath the magnificent dome of the lordly cathedral, and from the palm-thatched roof of the missionary chapel. They resounded in the churches of busy cities, and towns, and villages, and in the lonely chapels of hill and dale and silent jungle. The Church Militant of every clime and country and tongue proclaimed those words: "Hail, Mary, full of grace." They issued forth from lisping lips and pure souls as yet untouched by sin. The hallowed cloister, the lonely cell, the choirs of God's anointed were filled with their melodious melody. The hearts of Mary's children bowed down with sorrow, pain, and sickness exult with joy on this the glorious feast of their Mother. They come and place at her feet their humble chaplet or roses in thanksgiving for all the graces that have come through her hands into their souls; for the consolation she has poured into their hearts; for the many times she has wiped away their tears of sorrow; for the consolation she has whispered to them in time of danger and temptation: "Courage! Fear not! I am with you!"

REASON FOR ACCLAIM

Why is it that we all of one accord cling to this simple form when we address our Blessed Mother? Does it arise from a deficiency of privileges on her part? Is it that we are ignorant of the beautiful Litany of Loretto, in which we address her under so many loving titles? No; we are not ignorant of her great privileges; we are familiar with her glorious titles. But we select the one that thrills her soul with the same ravishing joy that filled her on the

morning of the Annunciation, the moment when the Angel Gabriel, fresh from the Heavenly courts, swept into her little home of Nazareth, filling her humble home with his mighty presence, and kneeling before her pronounced those words pregnant with the fate of the human race: "Hail, full of grace."

"HAIL, FULL OF GRACE"

For the moment the full import of those words was not understood by Mary. How could it be? The most profound mystery was being announced, the profound secrets of the Blessed Trinity were being revealed to a creature. It was made known to Mary how the power of God would overshadow her, that she would become the living tabernacle of the Godhead. The Second Person of the adorable Trinity would take from her all-pure flesh and blood a real body, and, after dwelling in her immaculate bosom, He would be born, the long-promised Messiah. The "Heavenly Dew" sighed for by the prophets of old was about to refresh the face of the earth and the clouds were about to rain the Just One. She was the one who with her virginal heel would crush the head of the serpent, and through whom that serpent's power would be broken. She of all the daughters of Israel had been chosen in the councils of the Divine Trinity to accomplish this tremendous work. She, the only daughter of Israel who by her vow of virginity had put herself beyond the range of human possibility of becoming the mother of the Lord, was chosen by the Godhead to be the Mother of the Second Person of the adorable Trinity made man. In the presence of the Archangel she was the humble handmaid of the Lord, and it was only when St. Elizabeth saluted her as the Mother of God that Mary burst forth in that song of joy and praise: "My soul doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." Thus it was that Mary gave expression to the rapturous joy that filled her heart to overflowing. She, the Mother of the Messiah, the second Adam, coming into the world to perform the will of His Heavenly Father, undid the evil following on the disobedience of the first Adam. The first Adam brought sin and death into the world, the Messiah, grace and life; the first Adam tears and sorrow, the second Adam, joy and everlasting happiness. Had not Mary every reason to rejoice in

her Son, in her God, and in her Saviour? All this, and much more than the human mind can conceive, took place on that day when the Archangel pronounced those words: "Hail, full of grace."

MARY'S JOY WHEN WE PRAY

As we travel down the path of life, memory frequently leads us back to our earlier years. A single sound is sufficient to obliterate the many, many years that are past, and we find ourselves once more—it may be but for an instant—in our youth or early manhood. A single word uttered in a certain tone will lead us back over the milestones of life long since past, and place us on the brink of the open grave, gazing on the coffin containing the mortal remains of a revered father or dearly beloved mother. Or it may be a song that lures us back, and we see once more plainly and distinctly the circumstances in which that song was sung by some dear friend, and feel again the great pleasure it gave us. So it may be that when our dear Mother in Heaven hears her children in this vale of tears repeating those words, "Hail, Mary, full of grace," the ravishing joys of annunciation day fill the soul of Our Blessed Mother once more and cause her to look down upon her "poor children of Eve," with greater love and compassion. The day of the Annunciation was the happiest day in the mortal life of our Mother. In every other scene in which she is presented to us in the Gospel narrative there is a tinge of sorrow, and Mary is what her name signifies, "a sea of sorrow." The one event which the world celebrates with great rejoicing was not one of unalloyed happiness for her. On the first Christmas night what tongue can tell the joy that filled to overflowing the heart of Our Blessed Mother when for the first time she pressed to her bosom her newly-born Babe, who likewise was her Lord and her God? But what were the circumstances surrounding the birth of our Redeemer? With heavy hearts Mary and Joseph went from door to door of the city of Bethlehem, close on the midnight hour, and received at each the same answer: "There is no room." Truer words were never uttered by mortal lips. For what house, be it ever so palatial, built by puny man, could contain the Lord of Hosts, the omnipresent, the omnipotent One? And Mary and Joseph were

compelled to betake themselves to the lowly stable and herd with the brute creation: "The ox and the ass had known their master's crib, but Israel hath not known Me." Though we may not think of it, there was poignant sorrow in the heart of Mary, intermingled with the joy that resounded in the hymn of the heavenly choir, "Glory to God in the highest." But on Annunciation Day, when the Archangel pronounced those words, "Hail, full of grace," there was no sorrow, absolutely none, nothing but overwhelming joy in the heart of Our Blessed Mother.

DEVOTION TO THE ROSARY

The Catholic Church, ever mindful of the spiritual welfare of her children, fosters and propagates all that tends to benefit our souls. Whatsoever leads man to his final end is encouraged by the Church. Numerous are her devotions, leading us onward and upward to God. Some favor one devotion; others another. Some devotions there are that appeal to us more than others. We become so intimately acquainted with them that they become, as it were, second nature to us. As children we were taught them by our parents. They grew with us as we grew, so that in time they became almost as necessary to us as our daily food. They became, as in reality they were, the food of our souls. We would be as uncomfortable without them as if by some chance we were deprived of our daily nourishment. Of such devotions the Rosary of our dear Mother is one. As children, the beads slipped through our fingers, and as men they have their corner in our pockets ever at hand to use them. Since the institution and propagation of the Rosary by our holy Founder and Patriarch, St. Dominic, it has been blessed and richly indulged by Pontiff after Pontiff. Again and again Catholics have been urged by the Vicars of Christ to the recital of the Rosary. In times of pestilence and public danger the Rosary has been the prayer of supplication of earth to Heaven. We ask our Mother through the Rosary to appease the just anger of God and turn His wrath from His sinful people.

ORIGIN OF FEAST

The Catholic Church shall never fail, for Christ Himself has promised to remain with His Church and that the gates

of hell shall not prevail against her. For two thousand years has she existed. During those long centuries many a time has she been shaken to her very foundations, but she has never been overcome. She has battled with her enemies from within and without; she has ever come off the victor. To one such conflict we owe the institution of the Feast of the Holy Rosary. During the Pontificate of St. Pius V., a spiritual son of St. Dominic, the Turkish power threatened Christendom. The Christian power was very much inferior to that of the Turks. The soldiers of the Cross valiantly went forth to meet the enemy and gained through the prayer of the Rosary, which the Sovereign Pontiff ordained to be recited in public procession through the streets of Rome, a signal victory, and broke for the time being the power of the Crescent in Europe.

THE DAYS OF PERSECUTION

Again, we are a Catholic people. Thanks be to God, we have held on to the Faith—one of God's greatest gifts to man—brought to us by our national Apostle. There was a time when all the nations of Europe professed allegiance to the Bishop of Rome, the Vicar of Christ. Look at the map of Europe today and see how many have fallen away and profess some alien faith. Through weal and woe Ireland ever remained faithful. It is very hard for us nowadays to realize what that fidelity entailed. We today have every opportunity of exercising our religion, but in the dark days of persecution it was not so. Without church, altar, and priest how could the Sacraments, the well-springs of grace, be administered? To us all have been pointed out the bleak mountain-side or narrow dell with its cave and rough slab of rock on which, as tradition has it, the Holy Sacrifice used to be said at the midnight hour, with the sentinels on guard, North, South, East, and West, to give the signal on the approach of the enemy. And, though vigilant the watch, it often happened that both priest and people were surprised and taken in the act of offering the Sacrifice of Calvary, and the blood of the priest mingled in the chalice with the Blood of Christ. How did our forefathers weather that terrible storm of persecution? How were they able to hand down to future generations the Faith they held so tenaciously? When "the curfew tolled the

knell of parting day," when all light and fire was extinguished throughout the land, the little family gathered round the grey of the cold hearth and repeated that all powerful prayer: "Hail, Mary, full of grace." It re-echoed in the roof-tree of the thatched cottage, mounted up and pierced the very gates of Heaven, stood before the throne of our Virgin Mother and reminded her again of the joy that filled her soul on the morning of the Annunciation. And Mary, in response to that prayer she loves so much, turned her eyes of mercy towards her persecuted children of Erin and strengthened in their hearts their love for their Faith, and made those hearts impervious to the tempting lucre of this world.

THE "HAIL MARY"

Has not the individual, have not we ourselves experienced the power and efficacy of this simple prayer? Watch the little children repeating it. You see at once that the child understands its meaning. You recognize that the child is speaking to its Heavenly Mother and endeavoring to fill that Mother's heart with joy. The adult repeating that prayer is at once ushered into the presence of his Queen, and presents with confidence his petition to her motherly benevolence. We often hear of the wonderful crowds of people who are ever flocking to the shrine of Mary in France, Lourdes. The hale and healthy go there to witness its wonders and return strengthened in faith. The sick and infirm go there to ask their Mother to give them back their health and strength. How are their petitions worded? Behold those poor wrecks of humanity kneeling before the holy grotto or stretched on their beds of pain. With eyes full of hope and outstretched arms, and with full strength of voice and lungs they cry out: "Hail Mary, full of grace." Lo and behold! our Heavenly Mother has heard that prayer she loves so much, and, turning her eyes of mercy towards her suffering children, grants their petitions. The sick and infirm leave their beds of pain. The maimed and the halt put aside their artificial aids, and present them to that ever growing mound that testifies to the world at large the power of those simple words: "Hail, Mary, full of grace." What wonder, brethren, that these powerful words of joyous meaning are

upon the lips of all men today, recalling the great joy that filled Mary's heart long ago, and giving to us at the same time a lively confidence in her loving protection!

"Assumpta Est Maria"

VERY REV. PRIOR S. M. HOGAN, O.P.

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THE Catholic world looks forward to the day when the Church, by the solemn definition of the Assumption of Our Blessed Lady into Heaven, will place the last jewel in the crown of the Queen of Heaven. The doctrine is not yet an article of Faith, but the teaching and tradition of centuries are unanimous in their support of the belief that the Immaculate Mother of God was assumed body and soul into Heaven, since God would not "allow His holy one to see corruption," the corruption of the tomb.

ORIGIN OF FEAST

The Feast of the Assumption had its origin in the East, and was celebrated in the Eastern Church in the sixth, and probably from the close of the fifth, century, since the Emperor Maurice, who died in 602, decreed that the Feast of the Assumption of the Mother of God should be observed solemnly throughout his Empire on August 15. Dom Cabrol, O.S.B., who is an authority upon everything liturgical, is of opinion that the festival began to be observed in the vicinity of the Tomb of Our Lady in Jerusalem, to which pilgrims went to pray. The Feast was kept at Rome in the seventh century, and it is mentioned in documents for the first time in the list of the Gospels of Würzburg. Our Lady's death was not called by that name: it was termed either the "Sleep" (*Dormitio*) or the "Ending," or "Birthday" of the Virgin; or the "Deposition, Ascension, or Exaltation of the Mother of God." The term "Assumption," however, has prevailed, and rightly. No other term so fittingly expresses the triumphant entry of Our Lady into Heaven, since it does not refer to her bodily assumption only, but to the whole

mystery of her unique and sublime exaltation. What this exaltation is we may learn from one of the antiphons of the office of the Feast: "The Holy Mother of God is exalted into the Heavenly kingdom above the choirs of angels." She is their Queen; they are her servitors and subjects. Our Lady's exaltation and glory is the reward of her humility as well as the fitting recognition by God of her position and dignity as His Mother, for in the words of Juliana of Norwich, God "is a full courteous Lord." In no other have the words of the "Magnificat" been so perfectly realized as in the lowly Virgin of Nazareth: "He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble." Our Lady realized all the glory that would be hers as Mother of God, and showed that she realized it when she prophesied that "from henceforth all generations should call her blessed." But she also knew that this glory and dignity, this honor and praise, until the end of time, would be hers, "because He that is mighty had done great things to me." So is Our Blessed Lady highest in the kingdom of God, because God has made her Queen who was "the handmaid of the Lord." The Assumption of Our Lady is the crown of her Immaculate Conception. She who knew not the taint of sin knew not the taint of the tomb. The corruption of the grave is a sequence of, and punishment for, sin. Why should the Immaculate see corruption, since she is Immaculate?

"ASCENSION" AND "ASSUMPTION"

It is worthy of notice that the Church makes a clear distinction between the exaltation of Our Lady and of her Son into Heaven in the very names she gives to this exaltation. Our Lord "ascended into Heaven"; His Mother was "assumed into Heaven." Our Lord is God; He ascended into Heaven by His own power, the energy of His Divine nature. Our Lady is a creature, the highest and most perfect creature, "the only one," as Cardinal Cajetan, O.P., says, "who touched upon the borderland of Divinity," but still a creature, not Divine being. She was "assumed into Heaven" by God. It was His love and power which exalted her; it was not any power that she possessed of herself, even though she was the Immaculate. Hence, even in her Assumption, Our Lady is "the handmaid of the Lord," and God, who is "mighty, hath done great things to her"

in bringing her to Himself body and soul, that she may "stand on His right hand a Queen in gilded clothing."

The liturgy of the Feast of the Assumption stresses the triumphal entry of Our Blessed Lady into Heaven. It is the royal progress of a Queen. "Mary is assumed into Heaven, the angels rejoice, and praise God in canticles." This is the first antiphon of the Vespers of the Feast. The antiphon at the "Benedictus" gives us, as it were, a vision of the triumph of Our Lady: it is taken from a verse in the "Canticle of Canticles." We seem to hear the choirs of angels asking the question in wonderment when they behold Our Lady going through their ranks: "Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in array?" (vi: 9.) The answer is flung back and echoes through the courts of God: "One is my dove, my perfect one is but one. She is the only one of her mother, the chosen of her that bore her. Thou art all fair, O my love, and there is not a spot in thee." Being a queen, Our Lady's intercession is that of a sovereign in behalf of her subjects, and the Church emphasizes this in the prayers of the Mass for the Feast:

Forgive, O Lord, we beseech Thee, the sins of Thy servants; that we, who by our own deeds are unable to please Thee, may be saved by the *intercession* of the Mother of Thy Son, Our Lord;

May the prayer of the Mother of God aid us, O Lord; and, although we know that she passed away from this life to fulfil the lot of her mortal flesh, may we nevertheless experience her *intercession* with Thee in the glory of Heaven;

We who have been made partakers of Thy heavenly banquet, implore Thy mercy, O Lord our God, that as we honour the Assumption of the Mother of God, so, through her *intercession*, we may be freed from all the evils that threaten us.

It may appear strange that, in these official prayers of the Church in the Mass of this Feast, it is Our Lady's intercession which is their salient feature instead of Our Lady's personal glory and triumph. But the Church always remembers and continually reminds us that God's Mother is our Mother; that she must fashion us into conformity with the image of her Son; and that, being our Mother, she cannot be indifferent to the needs of each of her children. Every mother knows the wants of her children, and the necessities of the weakest of her children are

particularly present to her. Mary, our Mother, knows the personal difficulties, requirements, and dangers of each of us; she sees them clearly in that Light of Glory which is hers for eternity. Therefore does the Church put forward our claim on the mediation and intercession of Our Lady with her Divine Son in the liturgy of the Feast of the Assumption, for it required the glory and crowning of God's Mother as Queen of Heaven that she might exercise her power to its full extent. In a Mozarabic Missal the Blessed Virgin is addressed as *suffragatrix incomparabilis*, "the incomparable advocate" whose mediation and power is so far-reaching that it extends to the Church Suffering as well as to the Church Militant. It is "by her that the fruits of life have been communicated to us," and she is "our life, our sweetness, and our hope." But we must keep this fact in mind when we pray to Our Lady, and the Feast of the Assumption is meant by the Church not only to give glory and show honor to her whom God hath honored, but also to stir up in our soul an ever-increasing confidence in our Mother.

ASSUMPTION AND IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

But the liturgy of the feast has another signification also: the Assumption, as has been said, is the crown of the Immaculate Conception. Our Blessed Lady is *the* Immaculate Conception. She is unique. Other virgins have followed her, but she is the Virgin of virgins. The seeds of sin which are the effect of original sin and the root of all human misery were never known to the Immaculate; therefore she did not incur any punishment due to sin. Therefore, again, her death was not the effect of sin, but a falling asleep that she might the more closely resemble her Divine Son. Her Divine motherhood consecrated her spotless purity. In the Secret of the Mass for the Feast of Our Lady's Nativity we read: "May the manhood of Thine only begotten Son aid us, O Lord; that He who, born of a Virgin, *took not away, but did hallow*. His Mother's inviolate purity, may, on this festival of her birth, deliver us from our sins, and make our offering agreeable unto Thee, even Jesus Christ Our Lord." The birth of Our Lord in preserving and consecrating His Mother's purity preserved her from the corruption of the tomb. Hence does St. John Damascene say that: "The Son of God, having preserved in-

violate the virginity of His Mother in being born of her, must also preserve her from the corruption of ordinary mortals after death." And so it is that Our Lady, who was prepared to forego the glories of the Divine maternity rather than her immaculate virginity, receives as a recompense the glory of assumption into Heaven as the crown placed by God upon her immaculate purity.

LOVE SEEKS UNION

Love seeks union. The more intense the love the closer the union; hence, St. Paul says: "He who is joined to the Lord, is one spirit" (I Cor. vi: 17). It is the secret of the sanctity of the Saints and its explanation; it is the secret and the explanation of the holiness of the Immaculate. No one loved God as did His Mother. It is quite true to say that God's will designs, desires, were never so fully one with the will, designs, and desires of any creature as with those of His Mother. Her reply to the angel: "Be it done to me according to thy word," was expressive at once of the most absolute abandonment to and conformity with God's will, and the fullest union between Our Lady's will and His. She loved God as God has never been loved. He loved His Mother, and His love is omnipotent and creative. It was His love that chose her from eternity to be His Mother, that prepared her so that she would be "a worthy mother" by creating her as perfect as even omnipotent love could create her, and that preserved her from every taint of sin. It was the same omnipotent love that found a way of uniting His Mother to Himself by further preserving her from the corruption of the grave in her Assumption. He is Lord, Sovereign, King. Mary is His Mother, the co-redemptress of the human race, because her will was God's will, and He wills that "all men should be saved." Therefore is she Lady, Sovereign Lady, Queen, and she received her titles of nobility on the day she was assumed into Heaven. It was for this reason that St. Stephen of Hungary called the Feast of the Assumption *Dies Magnae Dominae*—"the Feast of the Sovereign Lady."

The will of the Sovereign Lady is supreme; her power is unrivaled. It is for us to have recourse to her with confidence; not presuming, but trusting as a child trusts his mother, for "in her is all grace of the way and of truth; in

her is all hope of life and virtue. They that hold her fast, shall inherit virtue. . . . They that serve her shall be servants to the Holy One, and God loveth them that love her." As Fr. Tabb says:

Behold, the Mother-bird
The Fledgling's voice hath heard;
He calls anew,
It was thy breast
That warmed the nest
From whence I flew.
Upon a loftier tree
Of life I wait for thee;
Rise, Mother-dove, and come,
Thy Fledgling calls thee home.

Maryland's Men of Ideals

JOHN LAFARGE, S.J.

*Sermon preached at St. Ignatius' Church, on St. Thomas Manor,
Bel Alton, Maryland, August 19, 1928*

*Let us now praise men of renown and our fathers in
their generation. Ecclus. xlv, 1.*

OUR chief interest this morning is centered in the presence of our new Bishop. To your Lordship, Right Rev. Bishop McNamara, all of us join in extending the welcome of St. Thomas' Manor, of the church and of the congregation of St. Ignatius!

One hundred and thirty years ago the people of this congregation were gathered at this same spot to welcome their new Bishop, John Carroll, Bishop of Baltimore. From the hearts of all arose the cry: "America has a bishop at last!" There, in the upper hall of the Manor House hard by, met, over and over again, the Catholic clergy of Maryland, assembling to petition Rome for a bishop of the United States; and John Carroll was their choice. St. Thomas' Manor is the birthplace not only of the diocese of Baltimore, our present archdiocese, but of the American hierarchy.

EARLY MARYLANDERS

What sort of people built this church, and gathered here on that August morning one hundred and thirty years ago, to welcome and gaze upon their new Bishop?

The church itself is an answer to that question. Building then was difficult. For fifty-eight years the congregation had worshiped in the little chapel still attached to the Manor House, and now serving as a sacristy. Previously to that, they had used the little old church down on the shore of Portobacco Creek, at Chapel Point. Of this first church nothing today remains but the name.

The people who gathered here in 1798 were further in time from the beginning of St. Thomas' than we are from them. One hundred and fifty-six years—over a century-and-a-half—separated them from the humble beginning of that chapel on the creek in 1642, when Father Andrew White sailed up the Potomac River to found his mission to the Piscatoway Indians. But in every other way, they were nearer to their progenitors than we are to them. In those 156 years only one great change had occurred: the American Revolution. With the coming of the Revolution came also religious liberty for Catholics, freedom to erect their own places of worship, and this church is one of the first-fruits of that freedom. It is one of that chain of churches: St. Nicholas, Our Lady's Chapel, St. John's, St. Inigoes Manor, and others, built by Fathers James Walton and Charles Sewall.

MEN AND WOMEN OF IDEALS

Such great changes, however, have come between us and them that we imagine those ancient builders with difficulty.

As for their names—these lie scattered in the graveyard, and are in the names of their descendants today.

Their appearance? Except for the clothes, little difference from their descendants of the present time. But we are not concerned with names and other externals. It is the character, the nature of those men and women that we wish to ascertain; not only those of 1798, but all those Colonists who formed an unbroken line back to the furthest beginnings of the Colony: the men and women who made Maryland.

Whatever else we may know and say of them, let us remember one thing above all. They were men and women of ideals.

FALSE NEW VIEW

This seems obvious enough. Nor indeed was this ever questioned until of recent years. But of late it has been questioned. True, their idealism has been at times exaggerated, both by writers and by speakers. Nor have I any objection to legitimate corrections. But a new view has arisen:—that the early Colonists of Maryland were mere self-seekers, respectable but shrewdly calculating adventurers. Religious liberty and civic freedom, it is said, were not high and cherished principles with them, but were forced upon them as a mere policy for their own self-protection.

This new, belittling view is being taught in some schools of higher learning, quoted by partisan writers, announced from the platform at celebrations; and it is only a question of time when it will find its way into our textbooks, and so will filter down into the minds of the people at large.

We need only look at a letter in yesterday's *Sun*, where some individual writes that "Catholics were tolerant because they *had to be!*" Such a view is unfair and untrue.

True, that there was practical wisdom in the Colonists' course. They were practical Englishmen, not dreamers of a Utopia. But a man can be practical and an idealist at the same time. When those men came to Maryland, they put down their ideals in black and white on paper, that all might read. Those writings stand today.

TERCENTENARY OF FOUNDING

Six years from now we look forward to another celebration, the Tercentenary of the Founding of Maryland. What shall we celebrate on that occasion? Merely a migration of some people across the ocean? Merely a clever bit of colonization, aided by some shrewd publicity and an appearance of pious zeal? Were there none but worldly motives, guided by mere economic necessity?

If that is the origin of Maryland, let the Tercentenary be scrapped, or left to the librarians and archivists. But it is not. In 1934, as today in 1928, we shall honor the deeds

of great men. Not saints, not super-men, but still men and women of ideals.

Let the idealism of the Founders of Maryland be unquestioned. Let Protestant and Catholic and Jew unite on that basis in the celebration of the Tercentenary. There is none other. Let their idealism be vindicated by scholars and historians—the task is not difficult. Let it be graven in letters of stone and printed upon the written page and borne far afield in winged words that religious liberty and civic freedom were not mere accidents, but were the soul of the Maryland Colony at its foundation. And let us give our assent to no program for the future celebration, however ingenious or attractive, which slurs over, or fails to celebrate explicitly and honestly this unquestionable historic truth.

WHAT MANNER OF MEN?

It was, indeed, a tragedy, my dear friends, that the men who founded religious liberty in this country were the very ones to be deprived of the same. However, passing that over, the question arises still: granting that they were idealists, what manner of men and women were they that built St. Ignatius' Church, and were the ancestors of those builders?

My answer to this question can be summed up upon the five fingers of the hand.

AMERICANS

1. They were Americans. St. Ignatius' Church, like all our old Colonial churches, stands as a silent memorial to the fact that Catholics helped to shape the very fabric of our country at its origin, and that Catholicism was part and parcel of our earliest national life. In this, there is neither implication nor boast: it is a mere historic fact.

MEN OF PIETY

2. They were men of piety: deep, sincere, unaffected piety. This church is a monument to their piety. They loved Christ Our Lord, and they wished the best things for His House. They sent abroad for costly woods, silks, and materials for vestments and altar-furnishings. They wrought

long and patiently. They imported old Masters, or copies of the same, when works of art were wellnigh unknown in the United States. But far more than that, they thronged to the Sacraments; they taught piety and reverence to their children; and they left this spirit as a heritage to their descendants; for St. Thomas' Manor has always been known as the home of no mean order of piety.

LOVERS OF HOME

3. They were lovers of home life and home virtues. In their homes were morning and night prayers. Books of instruction and devotion were carefully treasured. Family ties were held sacred, and the aged and poor were cherished. The young men and maidens who joined hands before the altar of this church did not look on marriage as an adventure in selfish pleasure. They were not dreaming of "problems" and "incompatibilities." They took marriage upon themselves as a burden joyfully to be borne. Their homes were born at the altar, as it were, and grew at the baptismal font.

DEVOTED TO EDUCATION

4. They were devoted to the education of their children: to their training in secular learning as well as in morals and religion. For neither Protestant nor Catholic was there any question in those days of a school from which all religion was excluded. All alike believed in the value of secular education, but all alike believed in religious education as well according to their various tenets.

But it was no mere belief. Opportunities for secular education were near at hand, but to safeguard the faith of their own children, those Catholic men and women made heroic sacrifices. Down there, on the side of the creek, that we see this morning glittering in the sunshine, were whispered the long farewells to their boys and girls that were sent across in frail sailing vessels to distant England and Belgium. We see the lonely-hearted mother and father climbing the hill to the church after the last sad parting. Here, where we stand today, they too stood, and gazed far to the southward as the little vessel slowly made its way down the Potomac. They fixed their eyes upon the last glint of the white sails as the boat rounded the point and

carried away their loved ones for whom they had sacrificed in many cases their last penny, their every comfort, and for whose safety they had no guarantee but the merciful Providence of God. . . . Today, in old archives, we find the accounts kept in distant London or St. Omer's for "pocket money, linnen, cloaths, taylors expences, hatts, shoes, stockings, etc.," for little Neales or Gardiners or Brents.

MEN OF BREADTH AND CHARITY

5. Last, not least, they were men and women of breadth and charity. In a time and country where each man had to look out for himself, they were public-spirited. They lived in peace with one another. In a world of petty intrigues and jealousies they were tolerant. They were not only tolerant of other persons' personal views, but they were tolerant of the other races of men with whom they came in contact.

In other places the Indian was often vexed and harassed; but there were no Indian wars at St. Thomas'. When the red man waned, and the Negro came, the Colonists felt a deep sense of responsibility in his regard. Though they held slaves in accordance with the custom of the time, they looked upon the slave as their fellowman. Even in those days, the black and the white and the red man knelt before the same altar in equality as they do today. The spoken word of God and the sacramental Body and Blood of Christ were distributed impartially to all. They were concerned for the black man's bodily welfare, for his habits, his training in arts and crafts, and, above all, they felt responsibility for his spiritual welfare.

Today the descendants of these three races kneel as of old in peace and harmony before the altar of their ancestors. The white man, the "We Sort" and the colored man have each contributed to the history and the traditions of the parish. Let not that spirit of mutual responsibility pass away from this spot. New problems arise today for the less-favored races; new needs of training and education in order to cope with a changed and often a heartless world. As we have joined in the past, let us join the future, that those needs may be met and those problems solved.

A LIVING RECORD

To prove the picture that I have drawn, I need not take you back to ancient records. We have in our congregation today one whose own life has been a living record of the past. During her fifty years as organist, choir director and sacristan of St. Ignatius' Church, Miss Emily Hamilton has shown herself a true daughter of Colonial Maryland.

Her fifty years of service have been fifty years of piety. Summer and winter have witnessed her in silent prayer, morning, noon and night before the Blessed Sacrament. Piety for her has not gone up in mere sentiment. It has meant work: daily, hidden toil for her Lord and God; the lifelong care of His home. Mary and Martha have been united in her life. Busy about many things, she has ever found time to sit at the Master's feet in silent adoration.

Like the "men of renown" told of in the Book of Ecclesiasticus, she has by the "strength of wisdom" instructed many "in most holy words"; and "by her skill" sought out musical tunes, and published canticles of the scriptures . . . studying beautifulness, living at peace in her house.

As an educator, we see her again as a true child of the early Colonists. The monument to her charity is not one of brick or stone, but the kindly feelings prevailing in the hearts of all, without exception, in our little congregation; and all of us unite in offering today our homage to "Miss Emily" for a glorious record of fifty years spent in the service of Christ and for the honor of St. Ignatius' Church.

PRIESTS THE SOURCE OF INSPIRATION

Whence came that spirit of idealism of which this church is a symbol?

These things do not grow from the ground. They were taught. But how learn without a teacher or a preacher; and how shall one preach, unless he be sent? These seeds were sown by the teachers sent for that purpose by the Church of Christ.

A few days ago I took in my hand a sheaf of sermons preached here, in St. Ignatius' Chapel, before even this church was built. The paper was brown and crumbling with age, though the hand was firm and strong. They were written in the long winter nights, by the light of a guttering candle, before the flickering flames of an open arch-

fire.... Father George Hunter wrote some of those sermons during his thirty years at St. Thomas', and other men equally known. There was the fountain-head of that idealism. There was the word of inspiration—the leader's command. And so has it been ever since this church was built. So was it from the beginning of the Colony. The highest, the noblest thoughts were inspired by those early religious teachers: not only matters of piety and religious practice in the closer sense, but public spirit, tolerance for views and persons, home and community virtues as well. And these thoughts were born again in the hearts and found fruitage in the lives of their listeners.

Just as it is false to deny idealism to the Founders of Maryland, so too would it be false to discredit the source of that idealism. Let us have the full truth. What you have witnessed in the lives of a Father Brent Matthews, a Father Tynan or a Father Scanlan, in your own past; what you witness today in the devoted life and teaching of your present zealous Pastor, Father Carney, has been true from the beginning, and was true before the beginning of the colony. The ideals of the Maryland Founders ever found their source, as well as their interpretation, in the guidance and instruction of their religious teachers.

THE ABIDING RESIDENT

We have spoken of the dead, who have passed away, and of the living, who will follow them. But there is One for whom there is no past nor present nor future, but an eternal *now*, and who has dwelt here with us from the beginning. For two hundred and seventy-two years Jesus Christ, the Lord and Redeemer of the world, has lived at St. Thomas' Manor, hidden in sacramental form. For one hundred and thirty years He has dwelt night and day in the Tabernacle of this church.

There is just one more event that we may commemorate before we close, and it will sum up all that has gone before. Thirty years before the building of this church, on August 1, 1768, that is to say, just 160 years ago, there was established in this parish the Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. For twelve hours every day of the month the altar was never without the presence of an adorer, man or woman. The register of their names is still extant. There

your ancestors poured out their hearts. It is as a result, doubtless, of their pleadings with their hidden Friend of the Tabernacle that this church was built, and stands here today.

As a historian says, "From the scattered and lonely plantations of Maryland the incense of praise, adoration and spiritual meditation rose silently from morning till night."

The forms that knelt there are gone: but the little chapel that housed them still stands. Their prayers live, and their souls live, and their bodies shall rise again from the grounds of St. Thomas' Manor. May we all be with them in the Resurrection!